

Ironically, we had talked about delaying this announcement until September, but at the suggestion of Senator HAGEL, we decided Wednesday morning to make the announcement before we left for the August break. I think we had four members of the press in the gallery to cover the initial announcement of this year-and-a-half long effort. And of course by 5 or 6 o'clock that afternoon, we had heard the news of what happened in Minneapolis, which heightened the country's awareness of a problem that was well-known to those of us looking into this over the years.

This should never have happened in the United States. We have been successful over the years because we have understood the relationship of strong infrastructure systems, wastewater treatment systems, highways, bridges, and transit systems, to our ability to grow economically. Of course, some of the major efforts that have increased the prosperity of our country have been big ideas in infrastructure. Certainly the interstate highway system, under Dwight Eisenhower, is a classic example of a project that dramatically improved the economy of our Nation more than 50 years ago.

At any rate, there are a number of examples, and I hope my colleagues will look at this critically important legislation we have presented for their consideration. We look forward to further examining how better to deal with the large problems facing us when we reconvene this fall. As many of my colleagues may know, a \$1 billion investment, whether public or private money, would generate as many as 40,000 jobs. So, in addition to addressing major deficiencies in our infrastructure, it will also spur economic development and provide needed work for those in the construction fields and trades.

Again, this is an important issue, and one that is unfortunately receiving more attention than it would otherwise, except for the tragedy in Minnesota. In my home State of Connecticut, we went through a similar tragedy, as my colleague from Rhode Island may recall, on Route 95 along the Mianus River, the corridor running through his State and mine, down to Florida. A whole section of that road in western Connecticut collapsed. Four people lost their lives on that day when the Mianus River bridge fell. So we relate to and understand what has happened in Minnesota.

Again, our invitation is to take a look at this. It is an idea, a big idea, a large idea, creatively financed to be able to do something serious about this growing problem. It is a problem we are going to be hearing more and more about if we fail to take the necessary steps to improve this infrastructure. We must work to construct what needs to be constructed and put our feet back on the ground.

I thank my colleagues.

I am going to make some unanimous consent requests here.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 327

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 327 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. Reserving the right to object, the Senator from Connecticut is going to put forward a number of unanimous-consent requests. Because of the lateness of the hour, we have a number of Members on our side who, on many of these unanimous-consent requests that he will propound, have concerns about those, and so they have not been cleared on this side. I am going to object to this and to some of the others he will be putting forward.

I object.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 1538

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if the Senate receives the message from the House on H.R. 1538, the Wounded Warrior bill, with a request for a conference, the Senate agree to the request and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. Reserving the right to object on this, this bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent. This is something everybody on our side supports. It includes a pay raise for members of our military. But again, until such time as we receive this message from the House—at that time, I guess I will ask the majority to renew that request. Until that happens, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1257

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 257, S. 1257, a bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 3159

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives from the House H.R. 3159, the Dwell Time Act, the bill be considered as having been read three times,

passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 742

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 321, S. 742, that the committee-reported amendment be considered and agreed to, the bill as amended be read a third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table and any statements be printed in the RECORD as if read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1785

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 320, S. 1785, that the committee-reported amendment be considered and agreed to, the bill be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 558

Mr. DODD. Last, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 93, S. 558, that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, the committee-reported substitute as amended be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. THUNE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DODD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIX POINT PLAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, 7 months ago I opened this session by reminding myself and my colleagues that